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25 November 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Deputy Director (Administration)

SUBJECT:

I. SCOPE:

1. You have asked me to make a study of the causes of complaints and claims from personnel assigned to overseas duty with a view toward initiating corrective action to eliminate or minimize the number and seriousness of such complaints and claims. Obviously, a comprehensive study with factual conclusions and recommendations is not possible without enlisting the concentrated attention of a large number of Agency officials. Accordingly, this study will attempt to analyze the overall problem and to isolate the most productive areas for immediate attention, further study and corrective action. Wherever possible, specific recommendations will be made or at least a proposed course of action will be presented.

II. BACKGROUND:

1. Complaints and claims from personnel assigned to overseas duty are not necessarily indications of deficiencies or situations requiring corrective action. It must be recognized that it is human nature to gripe as a routine mechanism to relieve personal frustrations or tension, and, in many cases, to alibi actual or fancied deficiencies in one's own capabilities or performance. This tendency to gripe is particularly prevalent among persons who are transplanted to a completely foreign environment and who must not only orient themselves to new jobs and responsibilities but must also adjust themselves and their dependents to a strange economic and social environment. It is important that CIA recognize the severity of worries about actual and imaginary problems inherent in this adjustment to living and working overseas. This is important, not because CIA should endeavor to "baby" its personnel or to solve all of their personal problems, but because CIA should attempt to prepare its personnel as much as possible to meet and cope with these adjustment problems as they occur. Second in importance only to preparing people for the future is to listen to their gripes with understanding and if possible to provide helpful advice--the cathartic value of a friendly "chaplain" is well established. Lastly, it is vitally important that every effort be made to recognize the legitimate complaint or claim from the normal gripe and to not only treat the matter with promptness and equity but endeavor where appropriate to eliminate any general condition which may have led to the complaint or claim.

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2. It is, I believe, a fact that CIA probably has an abnormally high number of valid complaints and claims from its personnel. It also must be recognized that for every formal complaint or claim coming to the attention of senior Agency officials there are a many-fold greater number which are never formally submitted or are satisfied or rejected at lower levels. The reason CIA has an abnormally great number of complaints and claims from its overseas personnel is inherent in the nature and sensitivity of CIA operations which preclude the universal establishment of adequate administrative and supervisory facilities in the field and the application of consistent policies, regulations, and procedures to highly diverse field conditions. The problem is immediately complicated therefore by the fact that most complaints and claims concern specific individuals and situations rather than groups of persons and general conditions. It is also complicated by the fact that slow or costly communications are involved in getting a sufficient understanding of the problem and related facts to take corrective action.

3. Under these conditions, it is exceptionally difficult to administer, support and supervise several thousands of persons widely scattered throughout the world. These same trying conditions, however, make it vital that CIA do everything reasonably within its power to minimize or eliminate valid reasons for dissatisfaction and disaffection. CIA has recognized its problem in a broad sense. It has developed special policies, procedures and support techniques appropriate to the broad aspects of the problem. It does not appear, however, that the Agency has adequate awareness of the problems encountered by individuals in preparing and during their overseas assignments. There appears to be a lack of realization of the importance of supporting and assisting the individual. There appears to be no joint effort between Agency Administration and the Operating Offices having overseas personnel to analyze the causes of complaints and claims and to develop remedies therefor. The Office of Clandestine Services appears to have no general concept on the administration of personnel overseas and appears to exercise no general supervision over the Area Divisions as to the manner or effectiveness with which they administer their field personnel. Among the Operating Divisions, we find deplorable ignorance concerning Agency policies, regulations and procedures. We find extreme variations in interest or even awareness of the problem of administering personnel sent overseas. There are innumerable instances of personnel who have been sent overseas with inadequate training or briefing or who have been grossly misinformed as to their rights, privileges, benefits and responsibilities. Likewise, it has been common practice to ignore for weeks or months questions, problems or complaints submitted by field personnel. These conditions are not necessarily the fault of the individuals actually processing or administering overseas personnel. There is a great deal of ignorance

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and confusion caused by general lack of policy leadership, training and supervision.

4. In preparing this study the views of numerous experienced officials have been sought and methods of briefing and processing personnel destined for overseas have been carefully studied. In addition, the writer has relied heavily on his personal experiences in investigating and studying hundreds of complaints and claims.

III. ANALYSIS:

1. Analysis of the causes of complaints and claims are, of course, the key to corrective action. It will never be possible to eliminate complaints and some of the complaints may be so trivial that the causes may be ignored. It is necessary to analyze the basic causes, however, in order to single out those which are most frequent and important for further study and correction action.

2. It is believed that the principal causes are as follows:

a. Administrative errors, slowness or red tape in handling the official personal affairs of overseas personnel. These include the administration of personnel actions, pay, allowances, travel, shipment of personal property and the financial accounts of the individual with the government.

b. Inadequate technical and psychological briefing and assistance in the practical problems of preparing for overseas duty, traveling abroad, and adjusting to living abroad.

c. Unanticipated personal expenses necessarily but involuntarily incurred in carrying out official duties but which are not reimbursable under Agency regulations.

d. Actual deficiencies in Agency policies and facilities to assist individuals in coping with problems, situations, and risks frequently encountered in overseas assignments.

3. In discussing these causes of complaints and claims and particularly in recommending remedial action, it is necessary to draw a sharp line between CIA appointed employees who are going abroad under cover of some official U. S. government activity and staff agents and contract personnel who are going abroad under commercial or other unofficial cover. This division is necessitated by the fact that security policies at the present time preclude the training, briefing and processing of deep cover personnel by Agency administrative personnel and by the fact that the entire administration and supervision of such personnel is effected by a "case officer". In addition, the cover and operational environment of each of these deep cover personnel is usually unique to the individual or a small group of individuals and is therefore not susceptible to either broad policy or procedural handling. Lastly, contract personnel involve infinite variations in relationship to CIA, control by CIA, motivation

and experience. Generally speaking, if a member of the group has a serious complaint or claim for which he does not receive satisfaction, there is a serious loss of operational control or complete disaffection.

4. The first cause of complaints is that of administrative errors, slowness or red tape. This is an obvious and reasonable basis for irritation. It is not necessary to attempt to isolate any particular type or cause of individual errors. It is, on the other hand, extremely important that supervisory officials of the Agency be in a position to recognize bad administrative situations, and that corrective action be initiated. In certain areas, bad administrative situations have existed for years. This has been excused, and possibly justified in the past, by the tremendous growth and expansion of the Agency. Basically, however, the situation is believed to be attributable to lack of objectivity and foresight by administrative supervisors. The squeaky wheel has gotten the oil and little forward progress has been made. The lack of adequate regulations and written procedures in CIA is, I believe, conclusive proof of this lack of objective planning.

5. In this connection, it is strongly recommended that every major administrative office have a planning staff divorced from routine duties to develop formal procedures and to study and restudy methods of improving administrative processes. It is also recommended, if it is not already being done, that an effective reporting system be developed from the lowest supervisory officer in administration up to the DDA. This reporting system should be designed to disclose problems, backlogs of work and situations which require special consideration and assistance. The final recommendation is that an equivalent report be secured regularly from each substantial overseas activity in order that the problems and opinions of the field activities being supported are revealed. Although this appears to be soliciting complaints, timely information is essential to timely corrective action.

6. The second major cause is lack of adequate briefing and processing of personnel. It is inevitable that a certain percentage of personnel assigned to overseas will have illusions about their prospective life in a foreign country. It is inevitable that CIA will occasionally recruit a crackpot of irrepressible romanticist. Whether or not this is the case, it is imperative that all personnel going overseas be properly briefed and processed. Only if this is done with clarity and realism can the disillusionment frequently encountered be avoided as much as possible.

7. Proper briefing, in the broad sense, if based upon accurate information is the most important function CIA can undertake to eliminate complaints, claims and disaffection from overseas personnel. There is attached as exhibit "A" a listing of the information which an individual should possess before he departs for foreign duty. Briefing, in the sense used in this paper, excludes all aspects of job training. Briefing is that

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process by which an individual is given essential information to enable him to arrange or terminate his personal affairs in the U.S., travel and transport himself and family and effects to his overseas post and to become settled and reasonably adjusted to life in a foreign land. For purposes of this discussion "briefing" may be divided into general categories as follows:

- a. Technical briefing which involves advising and assisting in the actual paper work, processing, and placement of the individual in a travel and transfer status. This includes arrangements and advice concerning pay and allowances, draft board and military reserve clearance, passport and AGO card, vaccinations and inoculations, wills, power of attorney, income taxes, etc. It should include practical and helpful advice and information in all problems related to preparing personal affairs for travel, actual travel, establishing permanent residence and the subsequent administration of pay, allowances, leave, travel and government funds.
- b. General briefing which involves detailed information essential, or helpful to the individual in adjusting himself to a new economic and social system and possibly unaccustomed climatic conditions. It includes both practical and useful information regarding what household and personal property to take and what to place in storage, economic conditions in the area, social, recreational, educational and religious facilities. It should also include at least a minimal background on the geography, culture and politics of the area.
- c. Operational briefing which includes determination and development of cover and general preparation of the individual to live that cover, and perform his operational function in the field.

8. Basically, the technical type of briefing described in 7.a. above is the logical function and responsibility of Administration/CIA. The Central Processing Branch of the Personnel Division, Covert, is currently fulfilling this responsibility in part. Attached as Exhibit "B" is the processing check list and various written material which is read by each person being processed and briefed. It will be noted that several of the administrative offices, other than Personnel, have representatives in the Overseas Processing Branch to provide technical briefing and specialized assistance.

9. Our review of the present briefing and processing methods and scope is that the presentation is accurately and efficiently given. However, we believe the scope of the briefing is inadequate, and that the subject matter is too technical and too comprehensive for mental retention by the individual. It does no good to remind an individual that he was properly briefed when he is unable to remember and follow the instruction given. Either the individual should receive more thorough and time-consuming briefing or certain technical information should be furnished in written form for later use by himself and dependents.

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10. Our major criticism is the failure to give more useful advice and guidance in the practical problems of settling of personal affairs in the U.S., detailed advice and suggestions as to the problems of travel. Every effort should be made to ensure complete understanding of the essential principles of the Government allowance system, salary differentials, and travel regulations. The Department of State has an excellent pamphlet on allowances which so far as we can ascertain is not used at all by CIA in briefing its personnel. This is attached as Exhibit C and is illustrative as to how a technical subject can be painlessly explained to vitally interested but technically untrained people. Similarly, we believe travel brochures can be written not only covering all the problems of preparing for travel but can give helpful advice on actual travel to every principal country or city in the world. The prerequisites to the preparation and continuing modification of such material is information and proper organization of the information. The only effective source of such information is from travelers who experience the pleasures and difficulties of an overseas transfer. A recommended procedure would

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